

REMARKS

This Reply is in response to the Office Action mailed on July 1, 2004 in which Claims 1-20 were rejected. With this Reply, Claims 4, 5, 11 and 18 are cancelled; Claims 8, 10, 12 and 15 are amended and Claim 21 is added. Claims 1-3, 6-10, 12-17 and 19-21 are presented for reconsideration and allowance.

I. Objection to the Drawings.

Page 2 of the Office Action objected to the drawings by asserting that the drawings do not show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. In particular, page 2 of the Office Action asserted that the trigger mechanism recited in Claims 4 and 5 must be shown or the feature is cancelled from the claims. In response, Claims 4 and 5 are cancelled.

Page 2 of the Office Action further indicated that Figure 2 should be amended to add a legend such as --prior art--. In response, an annotated amended drawing sheet amending Figure 2 is filed herewith. Figure 2 is amended as suggested in the Office Action to add the legend --prior art--. A Replacement Sheet is also filed herewith. In addition, a letter to the official draftsman is filed requesting the amendment to Figure 2.

II. Objection to Claims 6, 13 and 19.

Page 2 of the Office Action objected to Claims 6, 13 and 19 asserting that it is "unclear how the outputting print media from the stacking means can be oriented in the same direction as a completed print jobs in a main output tray." Figure 4 illustrates print media output from stacker 404 into output tray 405. Figure 4 also illustrates print media being output into main output tray 402. As shown in Figure 4, the media output to tray 405 has generally the same orientation as media output to main output tray 402. In other words, if the media output to tray 405 is in a face-up orientation, the media output to main tray 402 is also in a face-up orientation. Likewise, if media is output to main tray 402 in a face-down orientation, the media

output to tray 405 is also in a face-down orientation. Applicants respectfully request that the objection to Claims 6, 13 and 19 be withdrawn in light of this clarification.

III. Rejection of Claims 1, 3-5, 8, 10-12, 15, 17 and 18 Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) Based Upon Hashimoto.

Page 3 of the Office Action rejected Claims 1, 3-5, 8, 10-12, 15, 17 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Hashimoto et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,445,903. With this Reply, Claims 4, 5, 11 and 18 are cancelled. Claims 1, 8 and 15, as amended, to overcome the rejection based upon Hashimoto.

A. Claim 1.

Independent Claim 1, as amended, recites a printer which includes a media flipper configured to engage and drive a sheet of media in a first direction along the main paper path and in a second opposite direction towards one of a second path and a third path leading to the stapler/stacker. Claim 1 further recites a redirector movable between a first position in which the media sheet moves along one of the second path and the third path and a second position in which the media sheet moves along the other of the second path and the third path.

Hashimoto fails to disclose a printer which includes a media flipper that is configured to engage and drive a sheet of media in a first direction along a paper path and a second opposite direction towards one of a second path and a third path, wherein the third path leads to a stapler/stacker. Hashimoto also fails to disclose a redirector which is movable between a first position in which the media moves along one of the second path and the third path and a second position in which the media moves along the other of the second path and the third path. In its rejection of the claims, the Office Action characterized gates 10a and 10b of Hashimoto as the media flipper and reversing device 13 as the redirector. However, gates 10a, 10b of Hashimoto (characterized as the media flipper) are not configured to engage and drive a sheet of media in two opposite directions. Moreover, reversing device 13 of Hashimoto (characterized as the redirector) is not movable between a first position

causing media to move along a second path and a second position causing media to move along a third path. Reversing device 13 is stationary.

Although Hashimoto does disclose reversing rollers 18 which move sheets of media in two opposite directions, reversing rollers 18 of Hashimoto do not drive a sheet of media in an opposite direction towards one of two possible paths. In contrast, driving rollers 18 of Hashimoto always drive the sheet of media towards a single path, sheet outlet 11. Hashimoto does not disclose a printer wherein the direction in which a sheet of media is moved is reversed and in which a redirector is moved to selectively direct or guide the reversed sheet of media to one of two possible paths. Thus, Claim 1, as amended, overcomes the rejection based upon Hashimoto. Claim 3 depends from Claim 1 and overcomes the rejection for the same reasons.

B. Claim 8.

Claim 8, as amended, recites a method for directing print media. The method includes reversing a direction of movement of print media along a first media path using an existing media engaging and driving member and selectively directing the media sheet to one of a second media path and a third media path, wherein the third media path leads to a stapler/stacker.

Hashimoto fails to disclose a method in which the direction of movement of print media is reversed by a media engaging and driving member and in which the reverse media is selectively directed to one of a second media path and a third media path, wherein the third media path leads to a stapler/stacker. In contrast, Hashimoto merely discloses reversal roller pair 18. Reversal roller pair 18 does not reverse the direction of movement of media towards one of a second media path and a third media path. Moreover, Hashimoto fails to disclose the step of selectively directing the media being reversed by reversal roller 18 to one of the second media path or the third media path. In contrast, the triangular member of reversal device 13 of Hashimoto appears to be stationary such that media being driven in a reverse direction by roller pair 18 automatically is directed to the same media path (sheet

output 11) in every instance. Thus, Claim 8, as amended, overcomes the rejection based upon Hashimoto. Claims 10 and 12 depend from Claim 8 and overcome the rejection for the same reasons.

C. Claim 15.

Claim 15, as amended, recites a printer which includes a media flipping means for engaging print media and reversing a direction of movement of the print media along a first printing path and redirection means for selectively directing the print media into a second path or a third path, wherein the third path leads to stacking means.

Hashimoto fails to disclose or suggest a printer which includes a media flipping means for engaging print media and reversing a direction of movement of the print media along a first printing path and redirection means for selectively directing the print media into a second path or a third path, wherein the third path leads to stacking means. In contrast, Hashimoto merely discloses reversal roller pair 18 which moves print media to a single media path (sheet outlet 11). Hashimoto does not disclose redirection means for selectively directing the print media into a second path or a third path. Thus, Claim 15, as amended, overcomes the rejection based upon Hashimoto. Claim 17 depends from Claim 15 and overcomes the rejection for the same reasons.

IV. Rejection of Claims 2, 6, 9, 13, 16 and 19 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103 Based Upon Hashimoto and Muraoka.

Page 4 of the Office Action rejected Claims 2, 6, 9, 13, 16 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hashimoto et al. in view of Muraoka et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,353,727. Claims 2 and 6 depend from Claim 1 and overcome the rejection for the same reasons discussed above with respect to Claim 1. Claims 9 and 13 depend from Claim 8 and overcome the rejections for the same reasons discussed above with respect to Claim 8. Claim 19 depends from Claim 15 and

overcomes the rejection for the same reasons discussed above with respect to Claim 15.

V. Added Claim.

With this Reply, Claim 21 is added. Added Claim 21 recites an apparatus which includes a printer device configured to print an image upon a medium, an output tray, a media driver and a director. The media driver is configured to engage and move the printed upon medium along a first path in a first direction to an output tray and is also configured to engage and move the printed upon media along a first path in a second opposite direction towards one of a second media path and a third media path, wherein the third media path leads to a stacker. The director is configured to move between a first position in which the printed upon media is directed into the second media path and a second position in which the printed upon medium is directed into the third media path.

The prior art of record including Hashimoto et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,445,903, fails to disclose an apparatus which includes a media driver configured to engage and move a printed upon medium along a first path in a first direction to an output tray and to also drive and engage the printed upon medium along the first path in a second opposite direction towards one of a second media path and a third media path, wherein the third media path leads to a stacker, in conjunction with a director that is movable between a first position in which the printed upon media is directed into the second media path and a second position in which the printed upon medium is directed into the third media path. Thus, added Claim 21 is presented for consideration and allowance.

VI. Conclusion.

After amending the claim as set forth above, claims 1-3, 6-10, 12-17 and 19-21 are now pending in this application.

Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 08-2025. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 08-2025. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 08-2025.

Respectfully submitted,

Date August 18, 2009

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STAPLER/STACKER FOR FRONT-ORIENTED
FRONT-ACCESS PRINTERS

Sarah Zeller, et al.
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ANNOTATED DRAWING SHEET

